

# ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

MELKITE GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH

130 ST. FRANCIS CABRINI AVENUE ✱ SCRANTON, PA 18504

Contact office: 570.343.6092 † 570.468.4854  
stjosephscranton@gmail.com ♣ www.melkitescranton.org

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

P. H. S.: Mich. Abda. Jos. Bartnicki. Nikki Boudreaux. George Bales Sr. Lucille Bales. Jayne Buckley. Chris Carey. Lois Cianci. James Kane. Maryann Nappi Donahue. Carol Downer. Dav. Fairclough, Sr. Rob. Fairclough, Sr. Sara Gomez. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Charl. & Joe Prezgia. Johanna Simon. Sue Solsman. Sus. Vieselmeyer. Dean & Sherry Yockey. **MEMORY ETERNAL:** ✱Rev. Char. Aboody. ✱Rev. Mich. Jolly. ✱Rev. Jos. Francavilla. ✱Rev. Theo. Leonarczyk. ✱Rev. Frank Milienewicz ✱Dn. Jos. Daratony. ✱Rev. Dn. Jos. Daratony. Dn. John Karam. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Charl. & James Abda. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Nancy Abda. ✱Janice Assaf. ✱Thalia Assaf. ✱Joe & Marie Barron. ✱Paul & Mary Ann Bauman. ✱A.J. Bolus. ✱Veronica Bolus. ✱Jos. Bolus. ✱Gary Bolus. ✱Natey Cheffers. ✱Nich. Cianci. ✱Patricia Cimacosky. ✱Ann & John Coury. ✱Mary Sue Betress. ✱Cecilia Davidson. ✱Joe. & Margt. Dillenburg. ✱Eric Jolly. ✱Joe King. ✱Blakely Landell. ✱Elaine Manuele. ✱Frank Milewski, Sr. ✱Frank Milewski, Jr. ✱Mary L. Mooty. ✱Karen Murray. ✱Marie Patchoski. ✱Anth. Simon. ✱Bill Simon. ✱Char. Simon. ✱Ruth Sirgany. ✱Mary A. Walsh. ✱Gen.

## CLERGY:

Rev. Christopher Manuele, Presbyter

## DIVINE SERVICES:

Tuesday :

Compline .....0:00 P.M

Saturday:

Great Vespers: ..... 3:15 P.M

Sunday:

Orthros ..... 9:00 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: ..... 10:00 A.M.

Holy Days:

Eve: Great Vespers: .... 5:30 P.M.

Day: Divine Liturgy ... 5:30 P.M

## HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION:

Before Vespers at 3:00 P.M.; following any service; or by appointment.

## HOLY ANOINTING OF THE SICK:

Following services /call the Rectory.

## HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

## VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:

Report Sexual Abuse: 1.800.479.5910

## SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON



*Love of the Prodigal Son*

DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

16 FEBRUARY 2025 ♦ TONE 06 EOTHINON 06 † PRODIGAL SON SUNDAY ♦ HOLY MARTYR PAMPHILOS & FRIENDS

<u>GREAT DOXOLOGY:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 17</i>
<u>ANTIPHONS:</u>	
<b>FIRST:</b>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 29</i>
<b>SECOND:</b>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 32</i>
<b>BEATTITUDES:</b>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 125</i>
<u>ENTRANCE HYMN:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 38</i>
<u>APOLYTIKIA:</u>	
<i>Resurrection (Tone 6)</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 44</i>
<i>Martyrs Pamphilos &amp; His Companions</i>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 99</i>
<i>Glory to the Father....</i>	
<u>KONDAKION: Prodigal Son</u>	<i>Handout</i>
<u>TRISAGION:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 50</i>
<u>PROKIMENON:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 54</i>
<u>EPISTLE:</u>	<i>1 Corinthians 6:12-20</i>
<i>Brethren</i> , all things are lawful for me, but not all things are fitting. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of anyone. Food is for the belly, and the belly for food, but God will destroy both the one and the other. Now, the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. For God has raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a prostitute? By no means! Or do you not know that one who cleaves tot a prostitute becomes one body with her? For the two, it is said, shall be one flesh (Gn.2 : 24). But he who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee immortality. Every sin a man com-mits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God - and that you are not your own? For you have been bought at a great price. Glorify God therefore in your body and in your soul which both are God’s.	
<u>ALLELUIA:</u>	<i>Liturgy Book p. 59</i>
<i>(Tone 1)</i>	
<i>O God</i> , you granted me retribution and make peoples subject to me and saved me from my raging enemies.	
<i>Therefore</i> , I will proclaim you, O Lord, among the nations, and I will sing praise to your name.	

GOSPEL:

*St. Luke 15:11-32*

*The Lord told this parable:* “A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.’ And he divided his possessions between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered up all his wealth and traveled to a far country; and there he squandered his fortune in loose living. And after he had spent all, there came a severe famine over that country, and he began to suffer from it. And he went and joined one of the local landowners, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. And he longed to fill himself with the pods the pigs were eating, but no one offered to give them to him. But when he had come to his senses, he said, ‘How many hired men in my father’s house have bread in abundance, while I am per-ishing with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.”’ And he got up and went to his father. But while he was yet a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the Father said to his servants, ‘Fetch quickly the best robe and put it on him, and give him a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet; and bring out the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; because this my son was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came close to the house, he heard music and dancing. And calling one of the servants he asked what this meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has got him back safe.’ But he was angered and would not go in. His father, therefore, came out and began to beg him. But he answered and said to his father, ‘Look, these many years I have been serving you, and have never disobeyed any of your orders; and yet, you have never given me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours comes, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes; you have killed for him the fattened calf!’ But he said to him, ‘Son, you

St. Cyril of Alexandria on the Parable

“What is the object of this parable?  
Let us examine the occasion which led to it; in this way we shall learn the truth.  
The blessed Luke said a little before concerning Christ, the Savior of us all,  
“Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Him.  
And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying,  
‘This man receives sinners and eats with them.’”  
Since the Pharisees and scribes were making an outcry  
on account of His gentleness and love for mankind,  
wickedly and impiously blaming Him  
for receiving and teaching people whose lives were impure,  
Christ set before them this present parable to show them clearly  
that the God of all requires even the person  
who is thoroughly steadfast and firm,  
who knows how to live in a holy manner,  
and has attained the highest praise for his sober conduct  
to be earnest in following His will,  
that when any are called to repentance  
– even if they are the most blameworthy –  
he must rejoice and not give way to a loveless irritation on their account.” ....

“For sometimes people are indignant at this,  
and even say, 'This man, who has been guilty of such and such actions...  
has been inscribed among the sons of God,  
and honored with the glory of the saints!'"

Such complaints come from an empty narrowness of mind,  
not conforming to the purpose of the universal Father.  
For He greatly rejoices when He sees those who were lost obtaining salvation,  
and raises them up again to that which they were in the beginning,  
giving them the garment of freedom...

“It is our duty, therefore, to conform ourselves to that which God wills:  
for He heals those who are sick...  
He seeks those who were lost;  
He raises as from the dead those who had suffered spiritual death.  
Let us also rejoice and, together with the holy angels,  
praise Him who is good, and the Lover of mankind.”

Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke, 107

The Older Brother

While the Father and the Prodigal are highlighted in this parable, in fact it contains three important characters: the Prodigal, the loving Father and the older brother. Some commentators feel that the older brother is the most important figure in the story because of the occasion on which the Lord told this parable. To find this context we must look at the first verses of the chapter which precede it, which are not read this Sunday:

“Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, ‘This man receives sinners and eats with them.’ So He told them this parable...” (Lk 15:1-3).

The Lord then tells not one but three parables about the joy over a repentant sinner: the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin and the story of the Prodigal. The Lord’s aim in each of them is to confront the self-righteousness of the Pharisees and scribes who saw themselves as properly observant Jews in contrast to those who collaborated with the Roman occupiers (the tax collectors) or those who ignored the precepts of the Law (the sinners). Thus each of the characters in the parable represents one of figures in the above three verses. We have the Rebel son, who represents the sinners, the Conformist son, who embodies the respect for the Law and tradition which characterizes the scribes and Pharisees, and the welcoming Father who is Christ Himself.

The Rebel is truly a prodigal, disrespecting his father by demanding what would come to him at his father’s death – in effect, saying “I wish you were dead.” As we know, he goes off and eventually loses everything. Finally, he decides to return to his father, who receives him with love.

The focus of the tale now turns to the Conformist brother who has done everything by the book but is every bit as lost as his brother ever was. As Fr Henri Nouwen tells us in his reflection, The Return of the Prodigal Son, (1992, p. 71): “Outwardly the elder son was faultless. But when he confronted his father’s joy at the return of his younger brother, a dark power erupts in him and boils to the surface. Suddenly there becomes glaringly visible a resentful, proud, unkind selfish person, one that had remained deeply hidden.”

Without realizing it, the older brother has gone off to a “strange land” just like the Rebel. He was no longer the faithful son of his father everyone thought he was. As his father’s eldest son, his place would be at the center of the festive gathering, seeing that everyone was welcomed and cared for. Hospitality was – and remains to this day – one of the most important activities in a Middle Eastern household. Refusing to take part made the Conformist the exact opposite of what he appeared to be: the faithful image of his father. He had no cause to look down on his brother; he too had fallen victim to “the tyranny of the passions” (St. Maximos the Confessor) and publicly insulted his father by his actions. He not only refused to stand at his father’s side before the guests; he even caused his father to leave them in order to deal with his son’s feelings.

Like the Pharisee in last week’s Gospel parable, the Conformist brother represents the scribes and Pharisees who are outwardly faultless. They observe all the precepts of the Law but look down on those who do not. The Lord Jesus does not tell them to ignore the Law, but to complete it with mercy and compassion. Elsewhere we find Him berating the Pharisees for this very reason: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others” (Mt 23:23).

are always with me, and all that is mine is yours; but we were bound to make merry and rejoice, for this your brother was dead, and has come to life; he was lost and is found.”

HIRMOS:  
KINONKON:  
COMMUNION HYMN:  
POST- COMMUNION HYMN:

*Liturgy Book p. 77*  
*Liturgy Book p. 83*  
*Liturgy Book p. 87*  
*Liturgy Book p. 87*

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

Saturday Afternoon, February 15

Mystery of Repentance:

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, February 16

PRODIGAL SON SUNDAY

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Afternoon, February 22

Mystery of Repentance:

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning, February 23

SUNDAY OF LAST JUDGEMENT

MEAT-FARE

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

O St. Joseph, chaste spouse of the Lady Theotokos, head of the Holy Family, we again place ourselves under your patronage. † Through your powerful intercession, bestow up on us every good thing both spiritual and temporal. † Protect this your parish from all spiritual harm and renew in us the spirit of repentance and a fervent desire for the kingdom of heaven. † Make this vineyard flourish with new souls and by an increase of faith, hope and love; may forgiveness, peace and joy reign within our holy fellowship. † In all we do, may the Name of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

- 15 February: Marie Shehadi Barron ✕  
from M/M Anthony Barrett  
16 February: Marie Shehadi Barron ✕  
from M/M Kenneth Woznicki  
22 February: Marie Barron ✕  
from M/M Kenneth Woznicki

Theophany House Blessings

If you would like your home blessed during this holy season please sign up in the back of the church, call the rectory 570.343.6092

2024 WEEKLY COLLECTION

February 09

Weekly Offering:	\$ 485.00
Holyday:	\$ 25.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 535.00

Thank you for your support!

St. Joseph Breakfast  
Sunday, March 23, 2025



# PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

EVERY YEAR ON THIS SECOND SUNDAY of the Triodion we hear the Lord’s story which we call the Parable of the Prodigal Son. In fact there are three important characters in this parable, recorded in Luke 15: the Prodigal, the loving Father and the older brother. Some commentators feel that the older brother is the most important figure in the story because of the occasion on which the Lord told this parable. To find this context we must look at the first verses of the chapter which precede it, which are not read this Sunday:

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## The Second Brother

The focus of the tale now turns to the Conformist brother who has done everything by the book but is every bit as lost as his brother ever was. As Fr Henri Nouwen tells us in his reflection, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, (1992, p. 71): “Outwardly the elder son was faultless. But when he confronted his father’s joy at the return of his younger brother, a dark power erupts in him and boils to the surface. Suddenly there becomes glaringly visible a resentful, proud, unkind selfish person, one that had remained deeply hidden.”

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## Are We Scribes and Pharisees?

The brothers in this parable represent two types found in our society today. There are independent individualists who are determined to “fulfill themselves,” to make their own way according to their own lights. There are also people who conform to the expectations of their family or society, seeking to earn the approval of their peers or the powers-that-be.

In the Church there are always people who equate being a good Christian with doing all the “right” things. Consciously or unconsciously, they use their acts of external righteousness to mask their unrighteous hearts. In the words of Metropolitan Athanasios of Limassol, Cyprus (the “Father Maximos” of *The Mountain of Silence*), “...we went to the shrines, we venerated, we took out our money and placed it in a box, we left our candles, our oil, our prayers, our names, our prosphoron, everything... But our hearts did not change at all. Having completed our duties, we are the same as we were before. We are ready to attack one another, ready to testify against each other, ready to be sour just as we were before. Our hearts do not change... I confess to you from my own experience that I have not seen worse enemies of the Church than ‘religious’ people” (from *Therapy for the Sickness of Pharisaism*). As the Lord said, *“these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.”*

## What Happens Next?

The parable ends without an ending. We are not told how the older brother responded to his father because the goal of the parable is that we examine what we would do. St John Chrysostom said, “Almost any noble person can weep with those who weep but very few of us can rejoice with those who rejoice.” Very few of us can really rejoice in the salvation of another... But how happy is the man who can rejoice in the salvation of his brother, who rejoices over his brother’s repentance more than his own well-being.”

The approaching Great Fast gives us an opportunity to care for the salvation of others. People attend the Liturgy or Lenten services who are not worshippers during the rest of the year. Do we invite our less fervent fellow-parishioners to worship with us during this season? Do we welcome them as returning brethren with love? Or do we say things like, “Oh, look who’s back – so you remembered how to get here!” A better approach might begin by reflecting on the attitude of the loving Father in today’s parable, an icon of Christ Himself.